

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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December 29, 2019

“Why Go To Rome Paul?”

By Mark White

Why are preachers and other Christians always traveling to Europe, Asia, the West Indies, Africa, Australia, etc.? “Why go to these foreign places?” “Aren’t there enough souls to save here in the United States?”

What motivates a preacher to leave home and family to travel in unfamiliar territory? I suggest it is for the same reasons Paul wanted to go to Rome, as outlined in Romans 1:9-18. Most likely, some in the first century questioned Paul’s desire to go to Rome.

“Why go to Rome?” may have been the question of some brethren who meant well, but who may have discouraged Paul by reminding him that Rome was the seat of paganism and infidelity. Others may have questioned his desire to go to such a beautiful and opulent city where so many wonderful things awaited a traveler.

For whatever reason, Paul made known his rationale for going to Rome to preach in Romans chapter one.



First, **Paul was in debt** (1:4).

He saw himself as a debtor to God. God had shown him the cure for his own sins and for the sins which beset society. Spiritually, Paul had been sick and diseased without any hope of living, until he met Jesus. He saw himself as the “*chief of sinners*”, yet he had obtained mercy and salvation (I Tim. 1:4). Paul wanted others to learn what he had learned. He could not rest until all men knew of this free gift available only in Christ.

Rome was the seat of the pagan Empire and no city needed healing from sin more than they. He desired to go where there were lost souls in need of the Gospel.

Secondly, **Paul went to Rome because he wasn’t ashamed of the gospel** (1:15).

He knew it could save all classes of people. He knew the gospel was the only thing that could save them. He wrote that men come to know the righteousness of God only through the gospel (1:17).

If Paul did not preach the gospel to the Romans, who could he expect to go in his place? The wrath of God awaited the impenitent and unsaved Romans (1:17).

Paul knew how to spare them by sharing with them the love, mercy, kindness and grace of God. No wonder Paul wrote, “*For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.*” (I Cor. 9:16, NASB).

Thirdly, **Paul longed to travel to Rome because there was a church there needing to be strengthened** (1:11).

Paul’s love for the church of Christ is obvious. He felt daily concerns for the church in every place (2 Cor. 11:28). The Roman church was not all that old and needed an apostle’s monitoring and encouragement.

An apostolically-imparted spiritual gift needed to be bestowed on them (1:11). The church at Rome needed what other New Testament churches had received—an exhortation to continue in the faith and information concerning what persecution might lie ahead for faithful children of God (Acts 14:22).

Paul knew of the essential task of edifying saints. If the church was to be strong in the Lord and the truth, then members needed to be taught, over and over again.

Fourthly, **Paul wanted to receive fellowship from Rome to continue his work of going elsewhere to preach the gospel.**

In fact, he told them of his plans to preach the gospel even as far as Spain (15:23-24). The same motives which would bring him to Rome would carry him all the way across the Mediterranean Sea to do similar work in those places also.

What motivates the faithful preacher today as he travels about preaching the Word? Why go to China, or England, or Russia?

Why go to Maine, or Missouri or Alabama or Arizona? *Why go anywhere?* Our motives must be like Paul's as he went to Rome.

“God’s Love And Man’s Duty”

by Jim Walsh

God is always willing and able to help man. No matter what the situation or how dire the circumstances, God can provide a way for man to be saved. It is also His great desire that we know what He wants to save us. Over and over again in the Scriptures, God attests to this fact: He is willing to save everyone.

The psalmist was convicted of this knowledge. Many of the Psalms ring forth with the truth that it is God who saves. No matter where we may be or the difficulty we may find ourselves in, God can save us! As David fled from Saul and his armies, he constantly appealed to God and was comforted by Him.

In Psalms 50, we note what is necessary if one has any hope of being saved, *“Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving And pay your vows to the Most High; Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.”* (Psalm 50:14-15) Let's consider these verses:

1. Man must be willing to seek salvation from God.

He says, “call upon Me.” Men always fail when they believe they can provide their own salvation. In the end they will be destroyed. *“There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”* (Proverbs 14:12)

2. Man must believe God is in control & that He is worthy of our worship.

God is not just a name. He is not just an “idea.” God is the Creator and Sustainer of all the universe! All life exists because of Him, as Psalm 50:1 teaches us, *“The Mighty One, God, the Lord, has spoken, And summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.”*

3. Man must believe that God is our Deliverer.

Our praying to Him in time of trouble, is not just an exercise to waste time. It is not just some “religious” activity. It is our communicating with the ONLY ONE who can and will deliver us in our time of need. We must believe in prayer and actively engage in it.

4. We must respond to being saved by glorifying Him.

Salvation is not the end, but the beginning! When God reaches down and redeems us from sin, it is so we can begin to live a new life for Him. Paul was inspired to write the following in Romans 6:4, *“Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.”*

This new life can only be lived properly, if it is lived in such a way as to actively seek to glorify our Father in heaven. It is not lived for self. It is not lived to go back to the world and engage in those activities which caused us to be lost in the first place. And, that glory can only be evident, if we live it according to His word. *“In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.”* (James 1:18)

If we seek to be saved, it must be with God's help. And if it is with God's help, then it will be according to God's word. You cannot have God without having His word. God has shown us His love for all mankind by providing salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16).

We must do our part by hearing His word, believing it, and obeying it. Then, and only then, we can have any hope of being saved. And once saved, our life must be a testimony to His love and power by glorifying Him.

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry's niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Linda Harris, Hazel Corner, Clay Ford, Clois Wright, and Dan & Linda Hunt, Martha Cottrell (Dan's Mom), Brandi Meade, Mollie Harris.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: "I Can Do All Things..."

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service: Fred Johnson
The Book of Romans (Kyle Pope)
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Announcements: Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Sam Johnson

Song Leader: Jerry Kennemur
Lord's Supper: Doug George
Assisting: Russell Briggs & Nathan Meade
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: "Following Jesus At A Distance"
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Jr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

January 1st:

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Johnson
The Book of Psalms (Randy Blackaby)
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Invitation: Adam Harris
Song Leader: Russell Briggs
Closing Prayer: Nathan Meade